

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

IO-10 SAM-01 SAB-01 SY-05 A-01 OC-05 CCO-00 SCCT-01

AID-05 OMB-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIE-00 /096 W

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O R 261505Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4985

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCINSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USCINCEUR

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STUTTGART FOR ELG

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS,PINT, LE, PLO

SUBJECT: BEIRUT SECURITY SITUATION DETERIORATES--ONCE AGAIN

REF: BEIRUT 8005

1. FIRM RESPONSE OF INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES TO INCIDENTS BEGINNING JUNE 23(REFTEL) FAILED TO RESTORE RELATIVE CALM. WHILE PERSISTENT CLASHES CONTINUE TO BE RELATIVELY RESTRICTED GEOGRAPHICALLY, NIGHT OF JUNE 25/26 SAW FIERCE EXCHANGES IN AIN RUMANNEH, SHIAH, FURN AS SHUBAK. RESIDENTS OF SURROUNDING AREAS HAVE DESCRIBED FIRING OF BOTH AUTOMATIC AND HEAVY WEAPONS (MORTARS,RPGS, ETC.) AS HEAVIEST SINCE APRIL TROUBLES AND ARE BRACING FOR RESURGENCE OF HEAVY FIRING ONCE DARKNESS DESCENDS ON CITY TONIGHT

2. CLASHES, WHICH BEGAN TUESDAY AND SPATTERED ALONG WEDNESDAY. PICKED UP CONSIDERABLE STEAM AFTERNOON JUNE 25 AND CONTINUED THROUGH HOURS OF DARKNESS.SECURITY FORCES PERSISTING IN EFFORTS TO CONTAIN SITUATION AND APPARENTLY HAVE ORDERS TO OPEN FIRE ON FRANC TIREURS, USING AS MUCH FIRE POWER AS NECESSARY TO SILENCE SNIPERS. LEBANESE ARMY SOURCE REPORTS CASUALTY FIGURES OF 11 KILLED, 46 WOUNDED AND WE UNDERSTAND SUBSTANTIAL MATERIAL DAMAGE HAS OCCURRED IN AFFECTED AREAS. SAME ARMY SOURCE TOLD DATT THAT UP TO 60 ROUNDS OF 120MM MORTAR FIRE WERE RECEIVED IN AIN RUMMANNEH DURING NIGHT OF 25/26 JUNE. SOME STRAY ROUNDS FELL OUTSIDE AIN RUMMANNEH AND RELIABLE LEBANESE OBSERVER REPORTS SHELL OR ROCKET, WHICH FAILED TO EXPLODE, STRUCK WALL OF MAIN MILITARYS HOSPITAL. SAME SOURCE COUNTED TWENTY HEAVY EXPLOSIONS DURING HALF HOUR.

3. EVIDENCE WHICH HAS ACCUMULATED SINCE NOON JUNE 25 POINTS FINGER OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUTBREAK AT PALESTINIAN "REJECTION" FROM AND THEIR LEBANESE LEFTIST ALLIES. OFFICIAL GOL SOURCE STATES THREE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED BY SECURITY FORCES (PARA 1, REFTEL) HAVE NOW BEEN IDENTIFIED AS PALESTINAINS AFFILIATED WITH IRAQI-SPONSORED ARAB LIBERATION

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FRONT (ALF). OTHER INFORMANTS CLAIM BULK OF FIGHTING HAS BEEN BETWEEN LEBANESE GENDARMES AND ARMED ADHERENTS OF PFLP, ALF, AND PFLP-GC (ALLIES IN THE "REJECTION" FRONT) AND RAG-TAG COLLECTION OF LEBANESE LEFTISTS REPRESENTING LEBANESE COMMUNIST PARTY, PRO-IRAQI BAATH PARTY INDEPENDENT NASSERISTS, ETC., SUCH ALIGNMENT SUGGEST LIBYAN AND IRAQI HAND BEHIND OUTBREAK (GEORGE HABBASH AND OTHER "REJECTIONIST" NOTABLES ARE CURRENTLY ENJOYING

IRAQI HOSPITALITY--- FBIS JN250640Y AND JN251945Y)

4. PHALANGE APPARENTLY HAS NOT RPT NOT BEEN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN RECENT FIGHTING. LATEST REPORTS INDICATE THAT, ALTHOUGH MOBILIZED AND IN POSITION IN NEIGHBORHOODS WHICH THEY CONTROL, PHALANGE MILITIAMEN ARE PRIMARILY OBSERVERS IN CURRENT CLASHES. IT IS IN OUR VIEW, EXTREMELY UNLIKELY THAT PHALANGIST LEADERS WOULD SEEK CLASHES AT THIS TIME. SO FAR AS WE DETERMINE, PHALANGIST FORCES ARE CRITICALLY SHORT OF CERTAIN KINDS OF AMMUNITION, ESPECIALLY MORTARS ROUNDS AND BELTED MACHINEGUN AMMO, POSSIBILTiy WHICH IS SOURCE OF CONCERN TO SECURITY OFFICIALS, EXISTS THAT PHALANGISTS AND OTHERS COULD BE DRAWN IN, IF CLASHES CONTINUE.

5. OVER LAST SEVERAL DAYS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT JOINT GOL/PLO PATROLS AND LIAISON GROUPS HAVE CONTINUED TO OPERATE. IN VIEW OF 'ARAFAT'S JUNE 23 MEETING WITH PRES FRANGIE AND FORMER'S JUNE 25 STATEMENT REGARDING PLO RESPECT FOR LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY (SEPTTEL), ACTIVITIES OF "REJECTIONISTS" AND THEIR LEBANESE COHORTS APPEAR AS MUCH A CHALLENGE TO 'ARAFAT'S AUTHORITY AS THAT OF GOL. WE HAVE NO RPT NO REASON TO BELIEVE AT THIS TIME THAT ITS NOT RPT NOT COOPERATING WITH GOL TO CONTAIN AND SUPPRESS FIGHTING. PLO APPARENTLY PARTICIPATED IN JOINT EFFORTS TO ARRANGE CEASFIRE JUNE 25 (FBIS JN251737) WHICH PROBABLE BROKE DOWN BECAUSE IN STIGATORS OF CURRENT OUTBREAKS DID NOT CONSIDER THEMSELVES BOUND BY AGREEMENT. SINCE EVENING JUNE 25, GOL SECURITY OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMED US SEVERAL TIMES THAT FATAH RPT FATAH UNITS ARE FIGHTING ALONG SIDE GENARMES AGAINST "REJECTIONIST" PALESTINIANS. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM THIS STORY WITH PALESTINIAN CONTACTS. IF TRUE, HOWEVER, "REJECTIONISTS" INCREASING OPEN CHALLENGE TO PLO LEADER-CONFIDENTIAL

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SHIP IN PAST TEN DAYS MAY HAVE FORCED 'ARAFAT TO TAKE MEASURES WHICH HE HAS HERETOFORE BEEN RELUCTANT TO ADOPT.

6. SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, ALL AMCITS ARE SAFE. BOTH LEBANESE AND FOREIGN RESIDENTS, HOWEVER ARE STILL BEING WARNED TO AVOID AIN RUMMANEH/SHIAH AREAS AND OLD DAMASCUS ROAD THROUGH FURN AS SHUBAK IS CLOSED TO TRAFFIC.
GODLEY

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